

I have secret original copy to Maindam  
He will sign it and I will  
for words it to you. After  
I have to sign it, please  
write Jackson. I am  
to go for his been suspended  
if they wait  
I will write decision  
I am for you  
I am for you

THE ASHLAND - O'MARA CASE

On October 26, 1934 the Board of Control of the State High School Athletic Association ruled that Bob O'Mara was ineligible to represent the Ashland High School during the football season of 1934 and asked Ashland to show cause why that school should not be suspended from the State High School Athletic Association for violation of the Association's rules by using O'Mara in contests with four secondary schools after he became ineligible. The Ashland High School has presented its answer through Mr. W. B. Jackson, the principal of the school and the official responsible for the conduct of athletics at Ashland under Rule XII of the Association's by-laws.

The correctness of the Board's decision as to O'Mara's ineligibility has been fully established by an investigation made by Ashland school authorities since the Board rendered its decision.

The question which the Board must now decide is whether the facts of O'Mara's ineligibility could have been known at the beginning of the 1934 football season upon such investigation as Mr. Jackson was expected to make in the case of each of his players. The Ashland answer relies upon two pleadings:

First, that after Ashland had certified O'Mara correctly for one full year Mr. Jackson sanctioned an incorrect certification because he had been misled by an oral statement and, second, that the error was repeated in the eligibility lists for the fall of 1934 when Mr. Jackson was deceived by an admittedly forged record card which had been substituted for O'Mara's permanent record card in the Ashland High School files. O'Mara's oral statement reduced his school record in the Holy Family High School from three semesters to two semesters while the forged record card omitted one semester of attendance in the Ashland High School.

In considering the first pleading, the Board can not ignore the evidence showing that Mr. Jackson, at the time he accepted O'Mara's oral statement, had in his files a transcript from the Holy Family School showing that O'Mara had attended that school three semesters and had completed, among other subjects, three semesters of algebra. Had Mr. Jackson not disregarded this written statement in 1933 he would not have been deceived by the forgery of records in 1934. A correct eligibility list itself would have exposed the fraud.

The Board does not doubt that Mr. Jackson was deceived by the O'Mara record card which had been placed in his files, but to permit the use of an exposed forgery as a defense would be a dangerous precedent for the Board to establish. When schools are not held responsible for the accuracy of their records the Association will become an impotent organization and its eligibility rules will cease to function. The Board has confidence in Mr. Jackson's honesty and integrity. It does not believe that he is personally responsible for the irregularities which have been discovered in the O'Mara case, but the rules of the Association make him officially responsible for the use of this ineligible player. The Board has no choice as to the decision it must make on the evidence before it. Under the mandatory provisions of Rule XIV of the By-Laws, the Ashland High School is hereby suspended from the Kentucky High School Athletic Association, the suspension to be effective from this date until July 1, 1935.

November 30, 1934.



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Members, Board of Control  
Kentucky High School Athletic Ass'n.

